

REMARKS

The Official Action mailed August 22, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully noted. This response is filed within three months of the mailing date of the Official Action and therefore is believed to be timely without extension of time. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that this response is being timely filed.

The Applicant has not received acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 2, 2004. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner provide an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 evidencing consideration of this Information Disclosure Statement.

Claims 1-13 were pending in the present application prior to the above amendment. Claims 1-13 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 14-38 have been added to recite additional protection to which the Applicant is entitled. Accordingly, claims 14-38 are now pending in the present application, of which claims 14, 19, 24, 29 and 34 are independent. For the reasons set forth in detail below, all claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Paragraph 2 of the Official Action rejects claims 1-13 under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-18 of U.S. Patent No. 6,717,181 to Murakami. In response, claims 1-13 have been canceled; therefore, the rejection is moot.

New claims 14-38 have been added to recite additional protection to which the Applicant is entitled. Claims 14-38 are based on non-elected original claims 6-30 from parent application Serial No. 10/147,924, now U.S. Patent No. 6,717,181. The Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 14-38 are in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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